

Dismantling the Weapons of **Ass** Destruction Handbook



By Sharron R. Oyer, Med

Author of
Experiencing Life Beyond Belief:
Letting Go of Addictive Fundamentally Mistaken Programming

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**Dedicated to those who shall remain nameless,
BUTT
you know who you are!**

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Introduction: What an Ass-inine Thing to Do!

We have all had the experience, usually more than once – the proverbial “kick in the ass.” It’s from an unexpected source in an unexpected time. Those two elements are what makes the weapon of ass destruction so lethal. We often feel that we *should* have seen it coming, and sometimes we *could* have seen it coming, but only in *hindsight*.

The wielder of these weapons? Sometimes it’s “mother nature” exerting “her” powerful unexpected devastation. Sometimes it’s the “freak accident” from out of nowhere or a devastating diagnosis (a “crap shoot”, as my brother calls it!). I’ve experienced them all! The disruption and destruction of our lives, both literally and figuratively, are impalpable. But this handbook isn’t about those types of unexpected kicks.

This handbook is about the worst kind of “kick in the ass” experience - the unexpected kick that comes from a trusted spouse, a loving parent, a close family member, a concerned boss, or a best friend. In retrospect you would say, “I never saw *that* coming, not from *them*! I never would’ve believed *they* would do such a thing – not in a million years!” “*They*” were your place of safety and security. You could count on “*them*” to be there for you, always, “come hell or high water”. But now, *they* are the ones creating “hell and high water” in your life. Don’t count on a fire extinguisher or life jacket from *them* any time soon.

These *ass kicks* usually come at a most inconvenient time. One of those times for me came when I was struggling with a career change. Uncertainty of my future was already at play *before* I got the kick. My most debilitating kicks were administered when I was in the throes of grief over the death of a dear friend and business partner. My life was already upside down. The kicks only made it more *upended* than it already was.

You already are having a tough time with life’s circumstances, and sometimes *they* know it! But oftentimes *they* are oblivious to what you are going through. For in this moment it’s all about them – their fears, their ego, their insecurities, their profit. They purposely look the other way during, and after, their kick in *your* ass.

The kick sends you reeling into confusion, uncertainty, and a “*how in the hell did this happen*” state of being. And, if you are an evangelical fundamentalist Christian, as I used to be, you are quite surprised at your new expressed language!

Your trusted relationship with *them*, the kicker, eradicates your sense of safety that you always had with *them*. You land in unknown territory mentally, emotionally, and sometimes physically. You *always* land in a spiritual quandary of questions that seemingly have no answers, at least at first.

If you are not careful, you can stay in that unknown territory for a very long time. It may appear as if you are “getting on with your life”, but in truth you are stuck in the quagmire of fear, anger, and resentment. Others may not know it, but *you* do! You feel the twinges of pain now and again when you are reminded in a thousand different ways of that kick. Usually it’s when you are sitting in silence when the pain in your ass is most in your awareness. Over time, you may even become proficient at covering up your

wounded ass and broken heart so that even *you* are no longer conscious of the effects of that devastating blow. At least you don't connect your current actions and reactions with that particular incident. After all, you successfully "picked yourself up, brushed yourself off, and moved on." But did you, really?

I hope this handbook helps you to truly do just that – with the fortitude you find within yourself that perhaps you didn't even know you possessed – you do "*pick yourself up, brush yourself off, and move on*" after experiencing the proverbial *kick in the ass*. My desire is that you successfully learn how to to "*deal with it*" (as I'm sure your ass kickers have told you to do). Steps on not just "*dealing with it*" and "*them*", but dismantling the weapons of ass destruction aimed at destroying you, and the others who will probably get the brunt of their blows. There usually are others. You probably aren't the first one to receive their blows, but unfortunately you won't to be the last one! That's why it's time to dismantle the weapons of ass destruction once and for all!

Step 1: Don't Spend Time Looking Behind You...Not Yet!

After being kicked in the ass, our tendency is to *analyze* the situation from our *rear* view mirror. The past moment(s), right before the kick and during the kick, seem to supersede our present moment awareness. If we have a really extensive *rear* view mirror, we can see far behind us, years of the “should’ve, could’ve, would’ve” moments in time. We think we *should have* seen this coming, for now, the signs in hindsight were pretty obvious. We think we *could have* avoided *this* situation, but in actuality we probably could not have. We certainly know we *would have* side stepped the boot aimed in our direction – the emotional pain and scars highlight that wish! But, this rear view mirror habit wastes precious time and energy – *recovery* time and energy! Don’t look behind you, not yet! **This first step is all about staying in the present moment.**

Now it needs to be all about *you*, not *them*! *They* got way too much of your attention in the first place, before you became the recipient of their aggressive kick. Do not get distracted with the past. Do not engage the kicker in irrational conversation in the present about the past. You will do a “glance back” in a later step, and perhaps even a confrontation, but for *now* you need a strategy for this tragedy, a strategy to recover. You won’t find this strategy looking backwards. *Here* is where you have landed. *Here* are your answers of survival – physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. When you are sitting in a minefield with potential explosive weapons of ass destruction, you must walk very carefully. You are in a position of vulnerability, still! Pay attention to the *now* / *here* present moment in time.

If you had landed on your feet it wouldn’t seem so overwhelming. But in all probability you didn’t, especially if the kick was swift and hard. And now you are face down in the muck and mire, in a place you could easily get stuck. You are in the sympathetic nervous system mode. Your brain’s frontal lobe of reasoning and emotional regulation has been put on hold. This is not the time to ANAL-ize how this happened and how you got here. This is stress reduction time, a time to listen to your body, and most importantly, to your inner voice as it begins to express what you need to do in this present moment for *YOU*.

It’s Okay to Feel Like a Victim, Initially:

We have often been admonished to not become a victim. To not feel sorry for ourselves. To “pull ourselves up from our bootstraps” (and from theirs!) and move on. But the truth is, in this particular incident when we did nothing to deserve the brutality of this kick, we certainly feel like a victim, and yes, as unspiritual as it sounds, we are a victim! The kick was not your fault. You did nothing to deserve it. Quite the contrary, you loved, you cared, you did your best to make *them* happy. You did nothing intentional to warrant this cruel “out of the blue” blow.

Some spiritual teachers say that you are not a victim, that you never were a victim. Some say that you somehow energetically drew this into your experience as a lesson to be learned, or a karma to be paid - that *all* of it is *your* responsibility, *your* doing, *your* fault,

for lack of a better term. All of that may have some semblance of truth in it. But for now, in this present moment, your bruised ass and broken heart feels your victimhood. Do not ignore those feelings. Do not apologize to yourself or others for what *they* perceive you did to deserve the kick. Whether good, bad, or indifferent, **these are viable feelings that need attention, not dismissal.** You do have a choice whether you stay a victim, but for right now, in this present moment, you must take time to recover from your “face in the muck” position in which you’ve landed, and the pain and scars that are now your present reality.

So it’s okay, and even necessary, to take a little time to feel sorry for yourself and lick your wounds. In the crudest terms, “kiss your ass” with loving care – don’t look behind you and tell your ass kicker to do it for you (as we sarcastically oftentimes do!) What does self care look like? Time to yourself *for* yourself.

For me self care looked like:

- *Physical* Attention - Joining the local gym to swim regularly. (My medical doctor told me that swimming probably saved my life when I received an unexpected “ass kicking diagnosis”!) Taking catnaps with Calypso and Toots when at all possible, and of course extra treats for all three of us when I needed a bite-size sweet “medication.” Walks in nature. Drives through Dunkin’ Donuts. Recruiting friends to help me find a new place to live – to help with the practical steps that made me feel overwhelmed. Cutting my “to do list” to what *needs* done, not what I or others *want* done. I had to constantly remind myself that I was in the survival mode, and that meant doing the bare minimum for others.
- *Emotional* Release - Journaling using expletives! Being raised an evangelical fundamental Christian, this felt uncomfortable at first, but oh so necessary to surface and express those pent up feelings! Crying. I’m not a crier. I’m a “stuffer” – as I was programmed to be, so this took some practice.
- *Mental and Spiritual* Reprogramming: The foundation of my evangelical background included the programming of “I am not valuable”, “I am not worthy of God’s love, or others”, and therefore, “I probably deserved this kick”, and so on. Each “kick ass” encounter was a dark night of the soul experience for me and I needed a new perspective, a new reflective mirror of *me first* before looking beyond to my future or being reflective of my past. I began reading *self-help* and spiritual books (besides the King James Bible!) that I had been dissuaded to read for years that were now bringing light and light-ness into my awareness. I wasn’t trying to find answers – I was letting the answers find me. And they did, over time.

One other necessary thing during this time - avoiding my kickers. This was not easy in some of the ass kicks I have received in my life. But finding space and time between me and *them* was essential to my healing. I know this is not always feasible, but it is important to find a safe place - physically, mentally, and emotionally - to recover. This freed me to take the next step – forward.

In all of this, I was nursing my wounds, and yes, feeling like a victim – not a bad thing – *butt* rather a necessary thing in the initial step of dismantling the weapons of mass destruction aimed at *me*.

***Step 1 – Don't spend time looking behind you...not yet!
Stay in the present moment. Take care of your self
!***

Step 2: Get Your Head Out of Your Ass

You will know, if you are paying attention to *you* and not *them*, when it is time for step 2...which encompasses deciding what that next step is! But you must do step 2 without your head in your ass, figuratively speaking.

After receiving my proverbial kicks in the ass, and there were several, my tendency was to want to step back and recover the relationship(s) I now missed – the “used to be” relationship(s). Perhaps, I reasoned, it was just an innocent “kick in the ass.” Perhaps they really didn’t mean what they said, or what they did, or so I tried to rationalize. Perhaps they were caught up in the moment of unrealistic expectations on their part. They had no choice. They did “it” for *my* benefit – for *my* own good. (Sometimes *they* even tell us that!) And I loved them (and oftentimes still do even after their kick – in spite of their kick!). I wanted to trust them – again, so that’s why I tried to justify their behavior and believe it could *never* happen again. A lot of programmed BS (Belief non-Sense) going on in that head and heart of mine! Yes, my head was definitely in my ass, and my heart soon followed!

But it’s time to get our heads, yours and mine, out of our ass – to stop being oblivious or ignorant of the obvious. As it turns out, in reality, *they* are the ones who benefited. It was *their* well-being *they* had in mind at our expense. Their kick, as most, if not all their life decisions, are really “all about *them*” – it always was. You need to accept this no matter where you decide to go from *here* – this present moment in time in which you have been sitting in “self-care.” Am I being too skeptical? Perhaps. Realistic? Most likely.

Some relationships are worth the time and effort to recoup, if given the chance. Sometimes stepping *back* into the relationship is in fact moving forwards. But sometimes, stepping *back* is going in the wrong direction. Step 2 is about figuring out the best step for *you* - *realistically*. Just as it was all about *them* in the action, it needs to be all about *you* in the re-action.

Some kicks don’t give you an opportunity to “kiss and make up” even if you want to. You are not given a choice. You will find in the long run this is a good thing, really! Ironically, this makes your decision easier of whether to “move back” or “move on.” And as it plays out you will find “no decision” was the “best decision” *for you*! From my personal “kick ass” experiences, the best future life for me happened when I had no choice except to leave *them* and “move on.”

Sometimes there are other players involved when you are considering “moving back” or “moving on” – the innocent bystanders who also felt the repercussions of the kick. They have to be considered as well. Sometimes Step 2 entails a temporary step *back* while finding the courage and practical means to *move on*.

And of course there are the apologies on the kicker’s part. – sometimes. Some kickers decide they want you to move back, and not move on! Sometimes they are sincere. Sometimes the promise of “I’ll never do that again” rings true. And, they don’t – sometimes. And oftentimes they believe what they promise. And sometimes, it’s their

own programmed BS (Belief non-Sense). Good intentions, but no follow-through. But oftentimes, the apologies are shrouded with a selfish agenda. Once again, it is all about them and little, if anything, about you. We can't see this with our head in our ass!

How to make the right decision with all this to consider? Trust your gut feeling, and trust, no matter how it appears, that you were kicked in the right direction. Sometimes the kick is so hard we are flying through the air not knowing where we are going to land, or from the aerial view, it doesn't look like we will be landing in a very good spot! But remember this, it did propel you *forward*, and *forward* is where you need to go! And, you can trust your gut to know how to land safely and continue to move forward after landing, no matter where you *end up*!

As a Christian evangelical fundamentalist I was programmed to believe that I could not and should not trust my gut feeling – my inner voice of wisdom. I was taught that I was born with a sinful nature, therefore, whatever I thought or felt was untrustworthy, especially if it was in seeming conflict with Scripture (the King James Version, of course) as it was interpreted by my pastor and parents. I could also be misled by Satan who could disguise his voice so that it sounded like God's "still small voice." This indoctrination caused such a struggle *in me* when I knew in my gut what my response should be *for me* in any given situation. An unnecessary struggle.

I was also taught that Bible has all the answers, clear and simple. I was told the stories and precepts of the Bible contained the answers to all my decision dilemmas. With this indoctrination well programmed into my psyche I ended up applying verses that were so out of context to the times and circumstances in which they had been written to this present moment in which I was now living! The skewed precepts were stretched to match my swollen posterior.

You don't have to be a Christian evangelical fundamentalist to fall into the trap of relying on inspired authors, books and podcasts to substitute for your own inner wisdom! Your programming may not be religious in nature, but it is still programming none the less!

Yes, we can benefit from other people's expertise and experiences, even King James Version Bible verses, but they are not to become a substitute for the wisdom that resides within us, that God has put within us! Never let the voices of others with the robes and the degrees, and the parental admonitions with your birth certificate in hand, be louder than the still, small voice that knows best of all what is the best for *you*. Each circumstance we find ourselves in is unique to us. What worked for *them* in *their* textbooks and experiences, even their own "kick ass" encounters, may or may not work for you. If I have learned one thing in my fundamentally mistaken life, "one size does not fit all" (even if it's written in the King James Version!)

We are so quick to ask and heed the advice of others before we even consider "following our gut." We think we need *someone else* to tell us what to do. We dismiss the divine nudges that are gently trying to prod us in the right direction, especially if it seems unreasonable. How do we know it's *our* divine guidance perception? It is never based in fear. It brings peace. It feels safe. Circumstances will begin to align to validate

what you are sensing. Synchronistic “happenings” will begin to appear. Divine guidance will begin to unfold to match what you are being told from within. Soon you will learn to recognize and then trust that voice, *your* voice – *you*! You need no one else – you truly don’t!

When the questions of “*what do I do about them?*” and “*where do I go from here?*” begin formulating in your mind and heart, always remember, your truth is first known in your gut. You’ll feel it there! Don’t worry that you won’t. There *is* a strong connection between your ass and your gut! Between the two there is a divinely created network of IN-SIGHT-FULL communication. *Always* follow your gut first - it will help you know what to do, and when to get off your ass where you landed from the kick! And when you are truly following your gut, your heart will soon follow! The result when that “ass-inine” thing happens to you? All three - your ass, your gut, and your heart will all be headed in the right direction!

***Step 2: Get your head out of your ass
and listen to your gut.***

Step 3: Turn the other Butt Cheek

Most of us are taught, especially in the fundamental evangelical world, that Step 3 is the *first* step towards dismantling the weapons of ass destruction – the *first* step in our healing. But in my experience, Steps 1 and 2 are crucial to practice *before* Step 3 is even feasible. You can't "turn the other cheek", whatever part of the anatomy you're referring to, when you are sitting in the muck of despair or stepping in the wrong direction. Take as much time as you need before embarking on Step 3! This step involves forgiveness – not an easy step nor a quick one, except if you are a programmed evangelical fundamentalist as I used to be. Then it was easy – *far too easy!*

Turn the other butt cheek, and forgive the ass kicker. Why was this so seemingly easy? Because I believed in the "pay back God" – the God who would avenge my enemies. I always had in the back of my mind that "someday *they* would get theirs," "someday the just Judge of the universe would make all the wrongs right," "someday I would be vindicated and justice would be served," "someday, on that great judgment day, punishment would await those non-repentant ass kickers of mine." This made my act of forgiveness less challenging, more palatable. I can forgive now because I know God, my Father, will not forgive and forget, at least not without repentance!

How I loved that often claimed Bible verse in which God made His intention clear: "To Me belongeth vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time..." (Deuteronomy 32:35 KJV) I especially loved "their foot shall slide" part! How appropriate for this "kick ass" experience! I was taught this meant they would experience a sudden, uncontrolled fall – a downfall, much like the one they had caused me! I also loved the fact that this verse was also quoted *again* in the New Testament! (Romans 12:19) It didn't matter to me, at that time, the context in which this verse was written, or how it had been translated and interpreted. I took it at face value and of course, what my pastor preached about it. I was forgiving AND claiming these verses with assurance, and relief! I believed in a God who paid back, with interest, and had Scriptural backup to prove it, or so I believed. I was fundamentally mistaken!

It IS easier to forgive when you know your Father in Heaven has your back(side). I know I always had that in back of my fundamental mind even without realizing it. Until...

Until Jesus, my beloved Master Teacher, taught *and demonstrated* a different type of forgiveness, one I had not seen for years in my fundamentally mistaken life. He went way beyond my righteous reasoning and misperception of forgiveness. He not only forgave his accusers, his tormentors, his crucifiers, his betrayers, and those close friends that had abandoned him in the hours of his greatest struggle, *he asked God the Father to forgive them, too!*

"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34 KJV) Period. End of sentence. Jesus had the audacity to ask God, no, to tell God, the Judge of the earth, as I perceived "Him" to be, to forgive them. This was a far cry from the hidden motivation of my forgiveness toward my ass kicker(s). No requirement or expectation of repentance.

No “I forgive you now but wait until the judgment day when what you have done to me will be vindicated!” No “repentance is necessary for forgiveness to be granted. Instead, simply, “Father, forgive them...” because what they were doing to him was in ignorance. And would not God, his Father, grant the request of “His” dear Son? And therein lies another yet fundamentally mistaken belief – that God would *not*. (But that is for another time to ponder...)

Their only sin – ignorance! Really? Not from my perspective! They knew *exactly* what they were doing, just as my perpetrators of pain did! The kick was calculated, planned even. The timing was impeccable. The blow was right on the mark.

I don’t see *ignorance*. I see a premeditated choice of words and actions meant to execute a selfish agenda. And we do hope and silently pray that they will get what they deserve. Forgiveness is not what we have in mind! And with that perspective we become even more victimized than we already are. And wallowing in this mode of thinking, *in our own ignorance*, we stay victims, for days, for months, and often for years. Until...

Until we choose to *not* stay a victim. *Forgiveness can be granted when we no longer feel our victimhood. Forgiveness IS granted when we no longer feel our victimhood! And that is how we dismantle the weapons of ass destruction once and for all.* Once again, it’s all about *me*, not about *them*.

Forgiveness does dismantle their weapons, because it shows the futility of their actions.

Sometimes the first challenge of forgiveness is not for our perpetrator, it is for ourselves. What had I done to deserve it? (because I must have deserved it!) Why didn’t I see this coming? Why was I so vulnerable? Why was I so stupid? We are good at the “blame game”, some of us more than others, especially blaming *ourselves*. But I must see myself as Jesus sees me – in ignorance, not in the misinterpreted definition of “sin” as we have been fundamentally programmed. In taking time to practice Steps 1 and 2, I know that now, and am ready to move on with Step 3 of turning my other butt cheek.

For me, forgiveness was not a “one time happening”, towards myself or “the other”. Step 3 was not a giant step (singular); it was baby steps (plural), and sometimes a step or two backwards in the process. But it was doable when I was out of the muck, thanks to self-care, and knew more definitively where I was headed. When I was beginning to thrive, not just survive, I could finally look in the rear view mirror and begin entertaining the thought of forgiveness. I could glance more objectively in retrospect when I had “moved on.” It was in *that* new place I could see more *ignorance* and *let go* of my desire for punishment. I no longer cared what would happen to *them*, in a healthy positive way.

The toughest thing you have to do is expose your other butt cheek! To do that you have to know how strong you are because of who you are, and that everything is working out for you – for your best interest. That’s what Jesus taught, and demonstrated. That’s the God he knew, and showed us.

Oh to see like Jesus... Oh to forgive like God...

Step 3: Turn the other butt cheek.

How do I know I have successfully completed all three steps? When I no longer see myself as a victim and are moving forward with gratitude.

Epilogue: In Hindsight

In my “kick ass” experiences that sent me reeling in a new direction, even a direction I initially did not want to go, as things played out with new players coming into my life, I eventually ended up in a place, literally and figuratively, that I could not have imagined. A place of gratitude even, that I had been “kicked in the ass” in the first place. This was a *new* place to embrace. A *new* opportunity to experience my personal strength and wisdom – something I had been programmed out of – until now.

In *hindsight* I realized that the kick had really been the best thing that could’ve happened to me. I was sent in a new direction in life...new professions, new places to live, new friends. I would have never discovered the new adventures if I had not “gotten the boot”.

I uncovered a resilience *within me* that I didn’t know I had. I found inner courage that emerged out of my safe predictable fundamental world, hidden in plain sight. And most importantly, I experienced a new refreshing relationship with God, and Jesus, that I hadn’t even imagined – *experiencing life beyond belief!*

Through it all, Jesus became far more than simply a ticket to Heaven someday. I never needed that ticket! Forgiveness was an automatic, remember?! His teachings became my new way of life in the here and now – in my daily present moment experiences. I know now that is why he came. “The Kingdom of God is within you”, he taught so many times to so many uniquely created beings who all had their own weapons of ass destruction to dismantle. The Kingdom of God, not a gated community in the eternal future, but a place of being in the eternal now – a place providing “intensive self care” (Step 1), “inner insight”(Step 2), and “unconditional forgiveness” (Step 3) – all steps to help me, and you, dismantle the weapons of ass destruction.

I also realized, eventually, that the greatest loss in my ass kicking experience, was *their* loss. I offered so much and had so much more to offer. Was I being egotistical? We often perceive, through fundamental programming, that recognizing our value *is* being egotistical. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Because you've taken time to read this, and hopefully think this through, I know your heart's desire, like mine, is to truly not become an ass kicker yourself. That's the temptation, you know. Inadvertently we could become one of *them*, God forbid – tough, insensitive, selfish, and retaliatory. In reality that is how ass kickers get their expertise. Everyone has a story, a history of being kicked in the ass. They have learned from their experiences, but not in a positive way. When they landed, they either stayed in the muck or stepped backwards, not forwards. But we don't want to join the “ass kickers anonymous club”, who, in fact, are not as anonymous as they want to believe!

What if you already have found yourself part of their anonymous club? It's time to take that label off your “human-beingness” and proudly become known as the unique Divine being that you truly are. It's time to be *that*, not *them*! It's time to dismantle the weapons of ass destruction once and for all!

Perhaps you and I can start our own club - “Smart Asses Anonymous”. Free membership with padded seating!

You are SO (Sharron Oyer) very loved!

Before you “move on” completely, check out my new book:

Experiencing Life Beyond Belief:

Letting Go of Addictive Fundamentally Mistaken Programming

It's great reading on your padded seating!